

PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

1. DATE 21 April 1957	2. LOCATION Phoenix, Arizona	12. CONCLUSIONS <input type="checkbox"/> Was Balloon <input type="checkbox"/> Probably Balloon <input type="checkbox"/> Possibly Balloon <input type="checkbox"/> Was Aircraft <input type="checkbox"/> Probably Aircraft <input type="checkbox"/> Possibly Aircraft <input type="checkbox"/> Was Astronomical <input type="checkbox"/> Probably Astronomical <input type="checkbox"/> Possibly Astronomical <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Unreliable Rpt <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient Data for Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
3. DATE-TIME GROUP Local _____ GMT _____	4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION <input type="checkbox"/> Ground-Visual <input type="checkbox"/> Ground-Radar <input type="checkbox"/> Air-Visual <input type="checkbox"/> Air-Intercept Radar	
5. PHOTOS <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	6. SOURCE Civilian	
7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION	8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS	9. COURSE
10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING Letter requesting that the "facts" be published in the case where a missile knocked off part of an airliners wing.		11. COMMENTS Unreliable report.

ATIC FORM 329 (REV 26 SEP 52)

JENKIN LLOYD JONES
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PRESIDENT

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMITTEE
HERBERT DRUCKER, CHAIRMAN
THE HARTFORD COURANT
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

April 26, 1957

Honorable James H. Douglas
Secretary of the Air Force
Pentagon
Washington, D. C.

Dear Secretary Douglas:

There has been some concern among newspaper people concerning the incident involving a Frontier Airlines DC3 near Phoenix, Arizona, last Sunday, April 21. As far as I know none of us on the outside has the facts. But since it appears that a collision knocked off a part of the plane's left wing, the assumption is that it collided with a straying missile.

The Associated Press has reported that the Air Force now requires all news of "national impact" about missile accidents to be cleared by the Air Force information office in Washington before being released.

Those of us interested in freedom of information have been greatly heartened in recent years by the inclination of the services, on the top level if not always out in the field, to respect the American public's right to know what is happening. But, obviously, none of us wants any service to disclose information that really should be kept secret. This particular incident may be a sticky one, somewhere along the border line. But from the outside it is hard to see why. And if accidents are going to happen, people are going to know about them. And here the old rule should apply: swift, honest disclosure of the facts is better than gossip and rumor. Therefore I hope it will be possible for you to do the following:

1. Make public the facts about this Phoenix incident, if indeed it has not already been done by the time this letter reaches you.

1957, Apr. 21-50 miles N. of Phoenix, Ariz.-Airliner strikes "something" said to have been Mt. top! (+10 Tornadoes in Texas!!)

RAF FILE 867-57

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Secretary James H. Douglas
Washington, D. C.

April 26, 1957

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2. Establish a system by which future incidents of this kind will be made public just as quickly, frankly, and freely--with due regard for security where it is actually involved--as are accidents to Air Force planes.

May I look forward to some word from you on all this?

Faithfully yours,

Herb Brucker

HB:md

21 APR 57

SAFIS-3c/Maj Spence/jmd/55809/7 May 57

MAY 9 1957

Dear Mr. Brucker:

Your letter to Secretary Douglas has been referred to this office for action.

There is no evidence of any Air Force involvement in the Frontier Airline incident of 21 April. No missiles were fired on that date. Obviously, speculation that a stray missile was involved is inaccurate. Information concerning the airline should come from that organization.

The Air Force has no desire to restrict unclassified information on our missile program. The two recent events reported by the Air Force when test missiles escaped control indicate this. We have always operated under the assumption that swift, honest disclosure of facts at such times is the only proper way to handle this type of story.

Recent instructions to field commanders were designed to hasten the flow of information, rather than retard it.

Let me assure you the Air Force will continue to operate its information policies in an open and above-board manner, consistent with national security.

Sincerely,

ARNO H. LUEHMANN
Brigadier General, USAF
Director of Information Services

Mr. Herbert Brucker
The Hartford Courant
Hartford, Connecticut

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001 READER-SAFIS-1
STAYBACK-SAFIS-3c